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CLAIMS

I claim:

1. A chair, comprising:

a seat defining a seat area and at least one upwardly facing seat pocket;

a back defining a back engagement area and at least one downwardly facing back pocket; and

5 a resilient elongated pivot member defining a lower section engaged within the seat pocket and an upper section engaged within the back pocket, wherein the pivot member comprises a resilient pivot bar formed of a resilient flexible material, and a limit member which cooperates with the pivot bar to define the limit of rearward movement of the back relative to the seat.

2. The chair of claim 1, wherein the limit member is formed of a rigid resilient material, and wherein the limit member functions to provide a stop against rearward movement of the back by means of interference structure interposed between the pivot bar and the limit member.

3. The chair of claim 2, wherein the interference structure comprises a protrusion formed on the pivot bar and an opening formed in the limit member, wherein the protrusion extends into the opening.

4. The chair of claim 3, wherein the opening and the protrusion are configured to define a gap between an edge of the protrusion and an edge of the opening when the back is in an at-rest position, and wherein rearward movement of the back causes the pivot bar to flex to reduce the dimension of the gap, and wherein rearward movement of the back to a predetermined rearwardmost position causes engagement of the protrusion with the edge of the opening to eliminate the gap and to prevent further rearward movement of the back relative to the seat.

5. The chair of claim 1, wherein the back is spaced above the seat so as to define a space therebetween, and wherein the pivot member includes an intermediate section extending between the lower section received within the seat pocket and the upper section received within the back pocket.

6. The chair of claim 5, wherein a lower extent of the lower section of the pivot member is fixed in position relative to the seat pocket and wherein an upper

portion of the lower section is spaced from a forwardly facing surface defined by the seat pocket, wherein initial rearward movement of the back results in engagement of the upper area of the pivot member lower section with the forwardly facing surface of the seat pocket when the back is pivoted to a first predetermined position, wherein resistance against such initial rearward movement of the back is provided by the lower portion of the pivot member prior to engagement with the forwardly facing surface of the seat pocket.

7. The chair of claim 6, wherein a lower portion of the pivot member upper section is spaced forwardly from a forwardly facing surface of the back pocket, wherein further pivoting movement of the back beyond the first predetermined position causes the upper portion of the pivot member to flex and to move into engagement with the forwardly facing wall of the seat pocket when the back attains a second predetermined back pivot position relative to the seat.

8. The chair of claim 7, wherein resistance to pivoting movement of the back beyond the second predetermined pivot position is provided by the intermediate section of the pivot member located between the seat and the back.

9. A chair, comprising:

a seat defining a seat area and at least one upwardly facing seat pocket;

a back defining a back engagement area and at least one downwardly facing seat pocket; and

a pivot bar defining a lower section received within the seat pocket and an upper section received within the back pocket, wherein the upper extent of the seat pocket and the lower extent of the back pocket are spaced from each other and wherein the pivot bar defines an intermediate area located therebetween;

wherein the seat pocket and the lower section of the pivot bar are configured so as to provide a first space between a forwardly facing wall of an upper portion of the seat pocket and an upper portion of the lower section of the pivot bar, and wherein the back pocket and the upper section of the pivot bar are configured so as to provide a second space between a forwardly facing wall of a lower portion of the back pocket and a lower portion of the upper section of the pivot bar.

10. The chair of claim 9, wherein rearward movement of the back to a first position relative to the seat results in flexing of the lower section of the pivot bar to close the first space and engage the upper portion of the pivot bar lower section with the forwardly facing wall of the seat pocket, wherein further rearward pivoting movement of the back results in closing of the second space and engagement of the lower portion of the pivot bar upper section with the forwardly facing wall of the back pocket and flexing of the upper section of the pivot bar, and wherein further pivoting movement of the back beyond the second pivot position is resisted by the intermediate area of the pivot bar.

11. The chair of claim 10, further comprising a limit member engaged with the pivot bar for limiting the rearward extent of pivoting movement of the back relative to the seat.

12. The chair of claim 11, wherein the limit member includes an opening and wherein the pivot bar includes a protrusion located within the opening, wherein the opening and the protrusion are configured and arranged such that rearward pivoting movement of the back to a predetermined position relative to the seat causes engagement of an edge of the protrusion with an edge of the opening to prevent pivoting movement of the back beyond the predetermined limit of pivoting movement of the back.

13. The chair of claim 12, wherein the limit member comprises an elongated strap member, wherein the strap member extends along a majority of the length of the pivot bar and includes a lower area which is fixed against movement to the pivot bar and an upper area within which the opening is formed.

14. The chair of claim 13, wherein the pivot bar includes a lower protrusion and wherein the strap member includes a lower opening within which the lower protrusion of the pivot bar is received, wherein the lower protrusion of the pivot bar and the lower opening of the strap member define a mating configuration so as to prevent axial movement between the strap member and the pivot bar.

15. In a chair including a seat and a back, the improvement comprising a resilient elongated pivot member having a lower section engaged with the seat and an upper section engaged with the back, wherein the pivot member comprises a resilient

5 pivot bar formed of a resilient flexible material for providing pivoting movement of the back relative to the seat, and a limit arrangement associated with the pivot member for limiting the range of pivoting movement of the back relative to the seat independent of the seat and the back.

16. The improvement of claim 15, wherein the limit arrangement comprises a limit member engaged with the pivot bar for limiting the range of pivoting movement of the back relative to the seat.

5 17. The improvement of claim 16, wherein the limit member comprises a limit strap overlying the pivot bar, wherein the limit strap and the pivot bar include cooperating engagement structure which is operable to stop movement of the back relative to the seat when the back attains a predetermined pivoting position relative to the seat.

5 18. The improvement of claim 17, wherein the cooperating engagement structure comprises a protrusion associated with the pivot bar which extends through an opening formed in the pivot strap, wherein the protrusion and the opening are configured such that an edge of the opening engages the protrusion when the back attains the predetermined pivoting position relative to the seat to prevent further pivoting movement of the back relative to the seat.

19. The improvement of claim 16, wherein the seat and the back define aligned open passages, wherein a lower portion of the pivot bar is received within the seat passage and an upper portion of the pivot bar is received within the back passage.

5 20. The improvement of claim 19, wherein the pivot bar, the seat and the back are configured so as to provide sequential engagement of the pivot bar with engagement areas defined by the seat and back passages so as to provide a progressively increasing resistance to pivoting movement of the back as the pivot angle of the back relative to the seat increases.